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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7329  
INFO RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0580  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 7567  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 5737  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4170  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1634  
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 4185  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 3280  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI PRIORITY 8168  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI PRIORITY 5743  
RUEHON/AMCONSUL TORONTO PRIORITY 0474  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2489  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION PRIORITY

UNCLAS COLOMBO 001651

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SENSITIVE  
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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS

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SUBJECT: IIGEP INFORMS DONORS IT IS LEAVING IN MARCH

REF: COLOMBO 1582

¶1. (SBU) As reported reftel, the International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP) has decided to end its work in Sri Lanka by March 2008. IIGEP informed the Government of Sri Lanka of this on December 7. Ambassador received the following letter dated December 4 from IIGEP.

BEGIN MESSAGE TEXT

Our Ref: IIGEP/US/12-06

Your Excellency,

Members of the IIGEP met in Colombo in November 2007 to assess the work of the Commission of Inquiry, the role of the Government in facilitating its work, as well as the contribution of the IIGEP to the process. In this context, Members of the IIGEP also had an informative meeting with representatives of donor countries on 14 November 2007. After careful deliberation, the IIGEP is of the opinion that it is nearing the end of its useful work. By the end of March 2008, after one year of work, the IIGEP will be at the point of having achieved all that is possible to accomplish within its mandate.

The Members of the IIGEP addressed H.E the President of Sri Lanka and the Commission of Inquiry on a number of crucial issues which, in our assessment, demonstrate that the structure and operations of the Commission of Inquiry lack transparency and fall short of international norms and standards. The IIGEP has offered observations directed at (1) factors undermining the independence of the Commission of Inquiry, (2) shortcomings in the investigations and inquiries, (3) inadequate disclosure of information to the Commission by State bodies, and (4) the absence of effective witness protection. The IIGEP has not observed any indication that our recommended corrective actions have been implemented by the Government or the Commission.

It is therefore, the intention of the Members of the IIGEP to

conclude our mandate at the end of March 2008 and to then submit to H.E the President a Final Report, in accordance with H.E. the President's Letters of Invitation to the Members of the IIGEP.

Once the Final Report is submitted to H.E. the President, the IIGEP will be required to finalize its operation in Sri Lanka with due consideration to all the relevant legal, logistical and administrative issues. The Coordinator of the IIGEP Secretariat, Mr. Cees Hindriks, will, as soon as possible and

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on a continual basis, pursue the details of the arrangements for the IIGEP's withdrawal in greater depth with your Office and the Head of Mission IOM.

On behalf of all the Eminent Persons,

Yours sincerely,

/s/

P.N. Bhagwati Chairman

cc. Head of Mission IOM

BLAKE